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# Preliminary checklist of butterflies (Insecta: Lepidoptera) from the Khandige estate in Sirumalai, Tamil Nadu, India, with three new reports for the Eastern Ghats

Vinod Sadhasivan<sup>1</sup>, Paulmathi Vinod<sup>2</sup>, Bawa Mothilal Krishnakumar<sup>3\*</sup>

## ABSTRACT

Lack of baseline data on any taxon would make it difficult to conduct in-depth ecological research necessary to devise conservation strategies. Therefore, we prepared a preliminary checklist of butterflies from Khandige Wildlife Preservation Estate, Sirumalai Hill, Tamil Nadu. Butterflies were sampled using pollard walk method for three days. We recorded 106 species of butterflies belonging to five families (Hesperiidae, Lycaenidae, Nymphalidae, Papilionidae, Pieridae, Riodinidae). Crimson Rose *Pachliopta hector*, Common Pierrot *Castalius rosomon*, Lime Blue *Chilades lajus*, Cornelian *Deudorix epijarbas*, Striped Tiger, *Danaus genutia* and Danaid Eggfly *Hypolimnas misippus* were recorded in the study area listed in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, while species listed under Schedule II (n = 13) and IV (n = 2) also sighted. Among the butterflies sighted Orange awlet, *Burara jaina fergusonii*, Common Tinsel *Catapaecilma major callone* and Short-banded sailer *Phaedyma columella nilgirica* are first report from the Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu.

**Keywords:** Lepidoptera, Butterflies, Wildlife Preservation

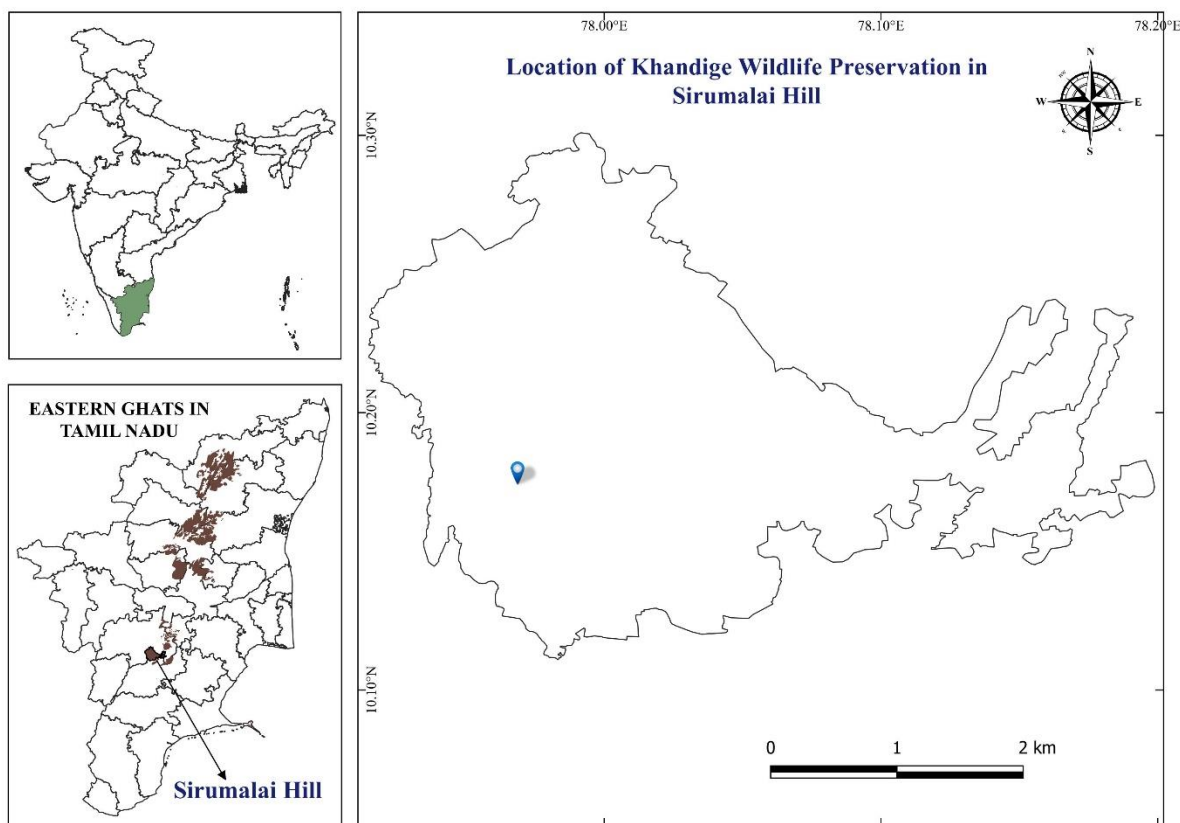
## 1. INTRODUCTION

Lepidoptera is the second-largest order of insects, consisting of two sub-orders, i.e., Heterocera (Moths) and Rhopalocera (Butterflies), with nearly 124 families (Dar et al. 2022). Owing to its diverse nature, abundance, inhabiting various land-use categories, being poikilothermic, and sensitive to subtle

ecological changes, it has been one of the key indicators species to evaluate the regional health of ecosystem (Naik et al. 2022). Butterflies can be monitored effortlessly, hence, a systematic study of their population could provide an early warning of environmental changes (Sreekumar and Balakrishnan 2001; Naik et al. 2022). Therefore, it has been considered an umbrella species (New 1997), thus studies on the population/community ecology of the common butterfly would render critical information on the status of associated species (Pearman and Weber 2007). However, scanty information on baseline data impedes such detailed ecological investigation that aid to devise strategies for conservation. As a consequence, the current study was undertaken to provide baseline data for the butterfly community in Khandige Wildlife Preservation.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Khandige Wildlife Preservation (henceforth KWP) is a private estate spread over an area of 1000 acres, in Sirumalai hills, Tamil Nadu, Southern India (Fig 1). Sirumalai is the southernmost mountain out of 13 Eastern Ghat hills in Tamil Nadu (Jawadhu, Yelagiri, Shevaroy, Chitteri, Kalrayan, Bodamalai, Kolli, Pachaimalai, Semmalai, Aiyalur, Karandamalai, Sirumalai, and Alagar; Ramachandran et al. 2016). The Sirumalai hill spreads about 300 km<sup>2</sup>, and four major ridges gently slope inside and form a plateau known as Pullimathurai. Mullupanrimalai (1379 m), Vellimalai (1355 m), Kalugumalai (1359 m), and Madagamalai (1245 m) are the major peaks in this region. The temperature of this region fluctuates from 18.5°C to 29.5°C in January and May, respectively. Annual rainfall is around 1100 mm, it receives rainfall from both southwest (June - September) and northeast (October - November) monsoon. Sattiar and Kalankaluvai are two smaller streams that drain in Sirumalai and are perennial with a scanty flow during summer (Vanak et al. 2002). The Kalankaluvai runs through the KWP, where it is joined by two other streamlets forming a series of waterfalls before entering the plains. The banks of the stream support rich riparian forest. The forests inside KWP are dry deciduous, dry evergreen and riparian (Vanak et al. 2002). The riparian vegetation and wide range of other vegetation in the forest supports a good butterfly population inside the estate. As there is little human interference in the Khandige estate, the forest has grown at its own pace for the past 20 years which has resulted in the diversity of flora inside the estate. The survey is also a step toward creating a comprehensive butterfly checklist so that the data could be monitored for future trends.



**Figure 1.** Map shows the location of study area in Sirumalai Hill, Tamil Nadu, India.

Since the primary aim of the study was to obtain the species checklist from KWP, we collected data for three days from 18th June 2022 to 20th June 2022, using the "Pollard Walk" method (Pollard 1993). The study area has an elaborate network of roads which also acts as a fire line to avert further spread. We used this network of roads as transects to cover the study area. Every morning one section of the area was covered; in such a way the entire area was surveyed. As butterflies are more active in the sunlight (Wittman et al., 2017), and with exceptional rains and gloomy skies during the early and late hours of the day, data was gathered from morning at 8:00 am to evening 3:00 pm. Butterflies sighted along the transect were recorded and photographed using Canon EOS 80D - Canon EF 100-400 mm and Sony RX10 IV wherever possible. For species that could not be identified on the field, photographs were used to identify and corroborated using literature (Bhakare et al. 2018).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A total of 106 species of butterflies belonging to five families (Hesperiidae, Lycaenidae, Nymphalidae, Papilionidae, Pieridae, Riodinidae) were recorded from KWP. In which 39 species belonged to Nymphalidae, while Riodinidae represented one species (Fig 2). Crimson Rose, Common Pierrot, Lime Blue, Cornelian, Striped Tiger and Danaid Eggfly were recorded in the study area listed in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, while species listed under Schedule II (n = 13) and IV (n = 2) also sighted during the study period (Table 1, Image 1-106).

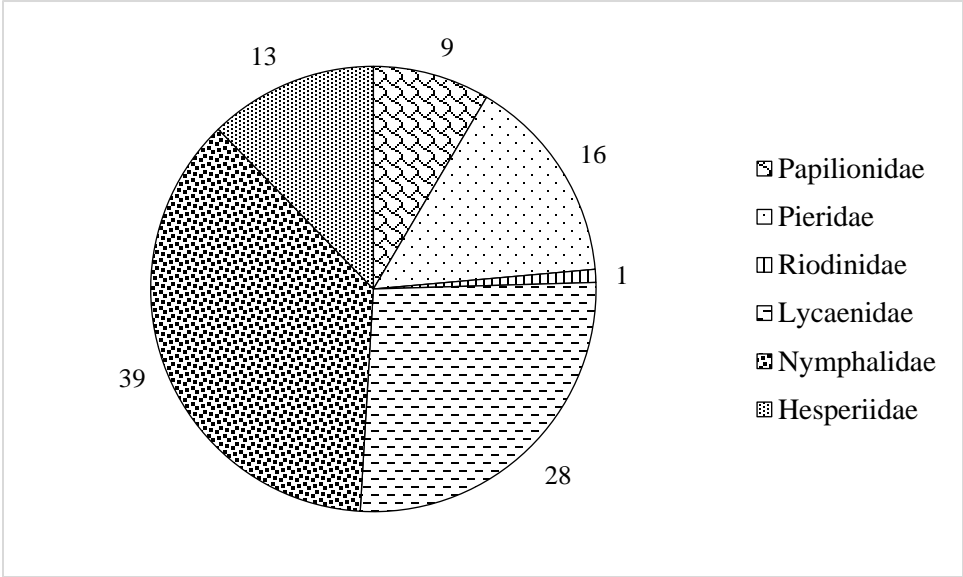


Figure 2. Family-wise composition of butterflies in Khandige Wildlife Preservation, Sirumalai Hills, Tamil Nadu

Table 1. List of species observed during the study period at Khandige Wildlife Preservation, Sirumalai, Tamil Nadu. Common and species names follow Kunte et al., (2022).

Common name	Scientific name	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Conservation and Special Status		
					IUCN Red List	Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972	CITES
Papilionidae - swallowtail butterflies							
Narrow-banded Bluebottle	<i>Graphium tereдон</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Common Jay	<i>Graphium dosон</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Tailed Jay	<i>Graphium agamemmon</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Common Mormon Swallowtail	<i>Papilio polytes</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Blue Mormon Swallowtail	<i>Papilio polymnestor</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Lime Swallowtail	<i>Papilio demoleus</i>	+	+	+	NA	NLP	NL
Crimson Rose	<i>Pachliopta hector</i>	+	+	-	LC	Schedule I	NL

Common Rose Swallowtail	<i>Pachliopta aristolochiae</i>	+	-	-	LC	NLP	NL
Southern Birdwing	<i>Troides minos</i>	+	+	+	LC	NLP	II
<b>Pieridae - yellow and white butterflies</b>							
Common Gull	<i>Cepora nerissa</i>	+	+	+	NE	Schedule II	NL
Striped Albatross	<i>Appias libythea</i>	+	-	-	NE	Schedule IV	NL
Common Albatross	<i>Appias albina</i>	+	+	+	NE	Schedule II	NL
Lemon Emigrant	<i>Catopsilia pomona</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Small Grass Yellow	<i>Eurema brigitta</i>	+	+	+	LC	NLP	NL
Common Grass Yellow	<i>Eurema hecabe</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Three-spotted Grass Yellow	<i>Eurema blanda</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Great Orange Tip	<i>Hebomoia glaucippe</i>	-	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Pioneer	<i>Belenois aurota</i>	-	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Yellow Orange Tip	<i>Ixias pyrene</i>	-	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
Common Jezebel	<i>Delias eucharis</i>	-	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
Psyche	<i>Leptosia nina</i>	-	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
Plain Orange-Tip	<i>Colotis aurora</i>	-	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
Indian Wanderer	<i>Pareronia hippia</i>	-	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
Indian Sunbeam	<i>Curetis thetis</i>	-	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
Mottled Emigrant	<i>Catopsilia pyranthe</i>	-	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
<b>Riodinidae - Punches &amp; judies</b>							
Double-banded Judy	<i>Abisara bifasciata</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
<b>Lycaenidae - Blues, Hairstreaks and Gossamer-winged butterflies</b>							
Red Pierrot	<i>Talicauda nyseus</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Angled Pierrot	<i>Caleta decidia</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Common Pierrot	<i>Castalius rosimon</i>	+	+	+	NE	Schedule I	NL
Plain Hedge Blue	<i>Celastrina lavendularis</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Lime Blue	<i>Chilades lajus</i>	+	-	-	NE	Schedule I	NL
Indian Cupid	<i>Everes lacturnus</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Dark Grass Blue	<i>Zizeeria karsandra</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Lesser Grass Blue	<i>Zizina otis</i>	+	+	+	LC	NLP	NL
Pale Grass Blue	<i>Pseudozizeeria maha</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Tiny Grass Blue	<i>Zizula hylax</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Tailless Lineblue	<i>Prosotas dubiosa</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Common Lineblue	<i>Prosotas nora</i>	+	+	+	NE	Schedule II	NL
Purple Leaf Blue	<i>Amblypodia anita</i>	+	-	-	NE	Schedule II	NL
Large Oakblue	<i>Arhopala amantes</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Centaur Oakblue	<i>Arhopala centaurus</i>	+	+	-	NE	Schedule II	NL
Common Tinsel	<i>Catapacilma major</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Cornelian	<i>Deudorix epijarbas</i>	+	-	-	NE	Schedule I	NL
Indigo Flash	<i>Rapala varuna</i>	+	-	-	NE	Schedule II	NL
Pointed Ciliate Blue	<i>Anthene lycaenina</i>	-	+	-	NE	Schedule II	NL
Apefly	<i>Spalgis epius</i>	-	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Common Hedge Blue	<i>Acytolepis puspa</i>	-	+	-	NE	NLP	NL

Forget-me-not	<i>Catochrysops strabo</i>	-	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Common Cerulean	<i>Jamides celeno</i>	-	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Zebra Blue	<i>Leptotes plinius</i>	-	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Pea Blue	<i>Lampides boeticus</i>	-	+	-	LC	Schedule II	NL
Gram Blue	<i>Euchrysops cnejus</i>	-	+	-	NE	Schedule II	NL
Malayan	<i>Megisba malaya</i>	-	+	-	NE	Schedule II	NL
Plains Cupid	<i>Chilades pandava</i>	-	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
<b>Nymphalidae - Brush-footed butterflies</b>							
Club Beak	<i>Libythea myrrha</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Glassy Tiger	<i>Parantica aglea</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Dark Blue Tiger	<i>Tirumala septentrionis</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Striped Tiger	<i>Danaus genutia</i>	+	+	+	NE	Schedule I	NL
Common Crow	<i>Euploea core</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Double-branded Crow	<i>Euploea sylvester</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Indian Nawab	<i>Charaxes bharata</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Malabar Glad-eye Bushbrown	<i>Mycalesis junonia</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Palni Bushbrown	<i>Telinga davisoni</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Tamil Treebrown	<i>Lethe drypetis</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Common Five-Ring	<i>Ypthima baldus</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Common Four-Ring	<i>Ypthima huebneri</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
White Four Ring	<i>Ypthima ceylonica</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Common Evening Brown	<i>Melanitis leda</i>	+	-	-	LC	NLP	NL
Rustic	<i>Cupha erymanthis</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Common Leopard	<i>Phalanta phalantha</i>	+	-	-	LC	NLP	NL
Commander	<i>Moduza procris</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Blackvein Sergeant	<i>Athyma ranga</i>	+	-	-	NE	Schedule II	NL
Common Lascar	<i>Pantoporia hordonia</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Common Sailer	<i>Neptis hylas</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Chestnut-streaked Sailer	<i>Neptis jumbah</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Clear Sailer	<i>Neptis nata</i>	+	-	-	NE	Schedule II	NL
Angled Castor	<i>Ariadne ariadne</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Common Castor	<i>Ariadne merione</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Blue Admiral	<i>Kaniska canace</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Grey Pansy	<i>Junonia atlites</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Chocolate Pansy	<i>Junonia iphita</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Great Eggfly	<i>Hypolimnas bolina</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Short Banded Sailer	<i>Phaedyma columella</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Tamil Yeoman	<i>Cirrochroa thais</i>	-	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Tawny Rajah	<i>Charaxes bernardus</i>	-	+	-	NE	Schedule II	NL
Yellow Pansy	<i>Junonia hierta</i>	-	+	-	LC	NLP	NL
Lemon Pansy	<i>Junonia lemonias</i>	-	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Plain Tiger	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>	-	+	-	LC	NLP	NL
Blue Tiger	<i>Tirumala limniace</i>	-	+	+	NE	NLP	NL

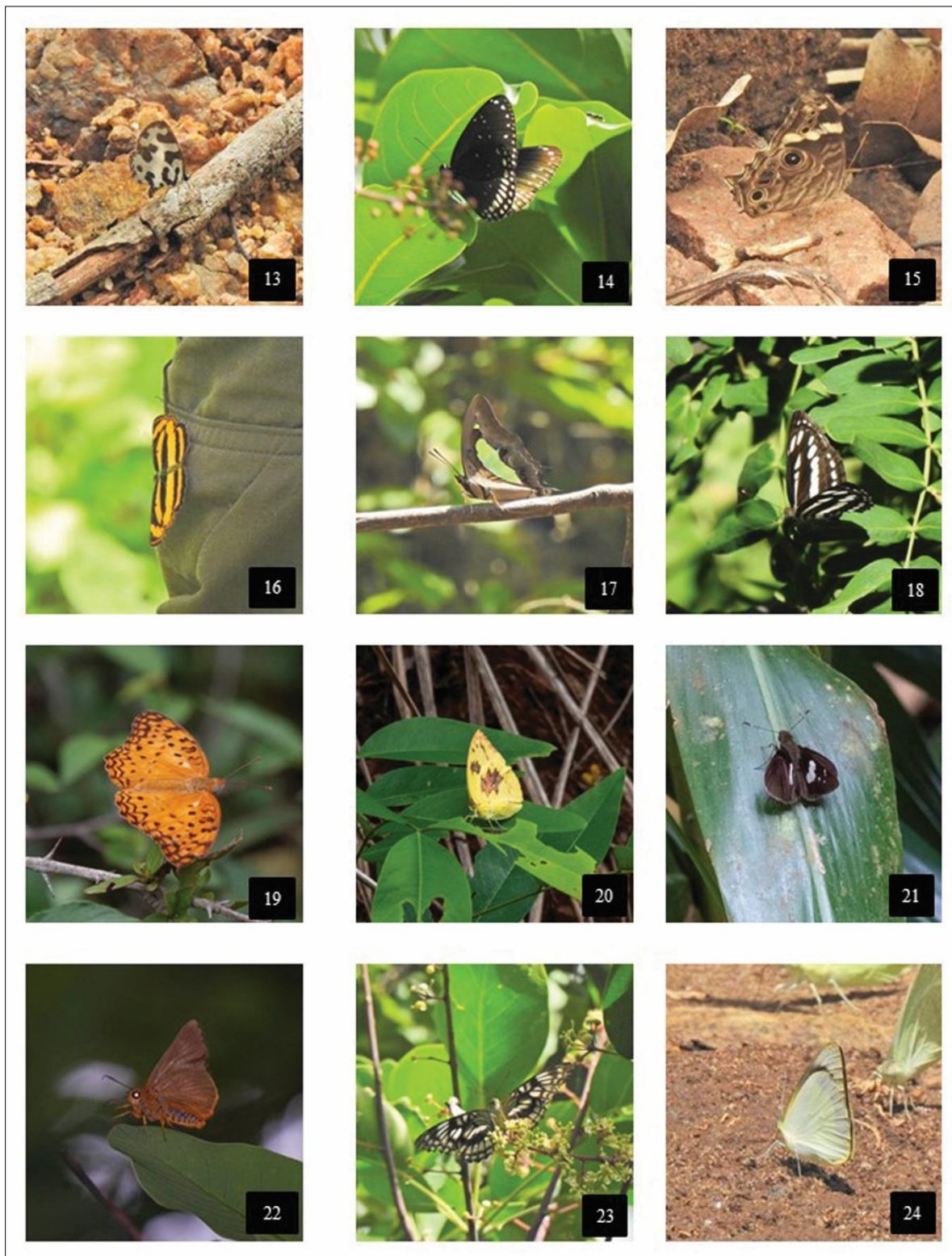
Tawny Coster	<i>Acraea terpsicore</i>	-	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
Common Treebrown	<i>Lethe rohria</i>	-	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
Tamil Bushbrown	<i>Mycalasis subdita</i>	-	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
Danaid Eggfly	<i>Hypolimnas misippus</i>	-	-	+	NE	Schedule I	NL
<b>Hesperiidae - Skipper butterflies</b>							
Common Orange Awlet	<i>Burara jaina</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
White Banded Awl	<i>Hasora taminatus</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Small branded swift	<i>Pelopidas mathias</i>	+	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
Chestnut Bob	<i>Iambrix salsala</i>	+	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Dark Palm-Dart	<i>Telicota bambusae</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Tree Flitter	<i>Hyarotis adrastus</i>	+	-	-	NE	Schedule IV	NL
Tamil grass dart	<i>Taractrocera ceramas</i>	+	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
Common Spotted Flat	<i>Celaenorrhinus leucocera</i>	+	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Fulvous Pied Flat	<i>Pseudocoladenia dan</i>	+	-	-	NE	NLP	NL
Restricted Demon	<i>Notocrypta curvifascia</i>	-	+	-	NE	NLP	NL
Common Banded Demon	<i>Notocrypta paralysos</i>	-	+	+	NE	NLP	NL
Indian Dartlet	<i>Oriens goloides</i>	+	-	+	NE	NLP	NL
Moore's ace	<i>Halpe porus</i>	-	-	+	NE	NLP	NL

LC – Least Concern; NA – Not Applicable; NE – Not Evaluated; NLP – Not legally Protected; NL – Not Listed.



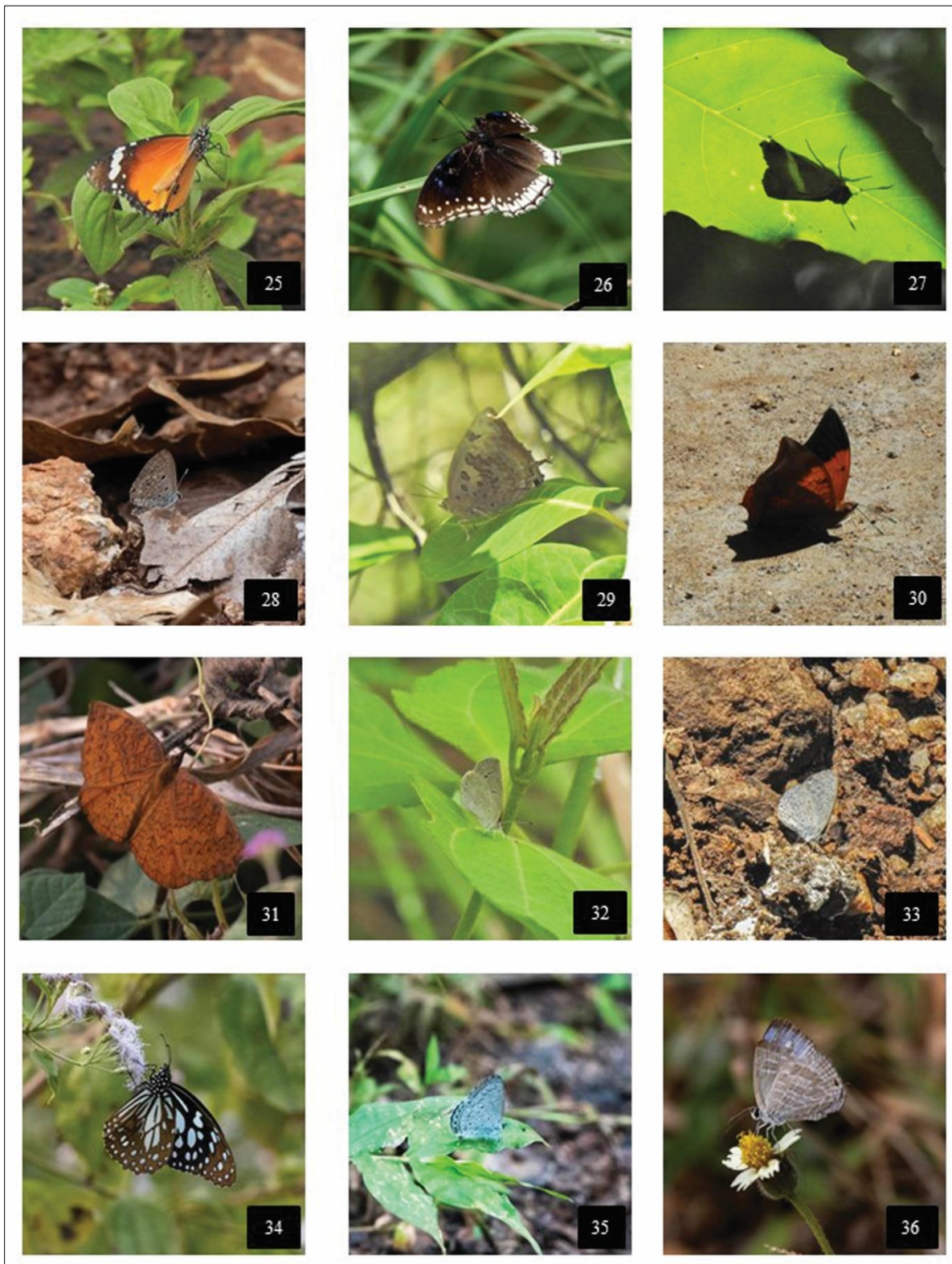


**Image 1-12.** 1-Tailless Lineblue *Prosotas dubiosa* | 2-Tamil Bushbrown *Mycalesis subdita* | 3-Tamil Grass Dart *Taractrocera ceramas* | 4-Common Five-ring *Ypthima baldus* | 5-Red Pierrot *Talica nyseus* | 6-Striped Tiger *Danaus genutia* | 7-Common Grass Yellow-*Eurema hecabe* | 8-Clear Sailer *Neptis nata* | 9-Palni Bushbrown *Telinga davisoni* | 10-Common Pierrot *Castalius rosimon* | 11-Dark Palm-Dart *Telicta bambusae* | 12-Plain Orange-tip *Colotis aurora* © Vinod Sadhasivan & Paulmathi Vinod



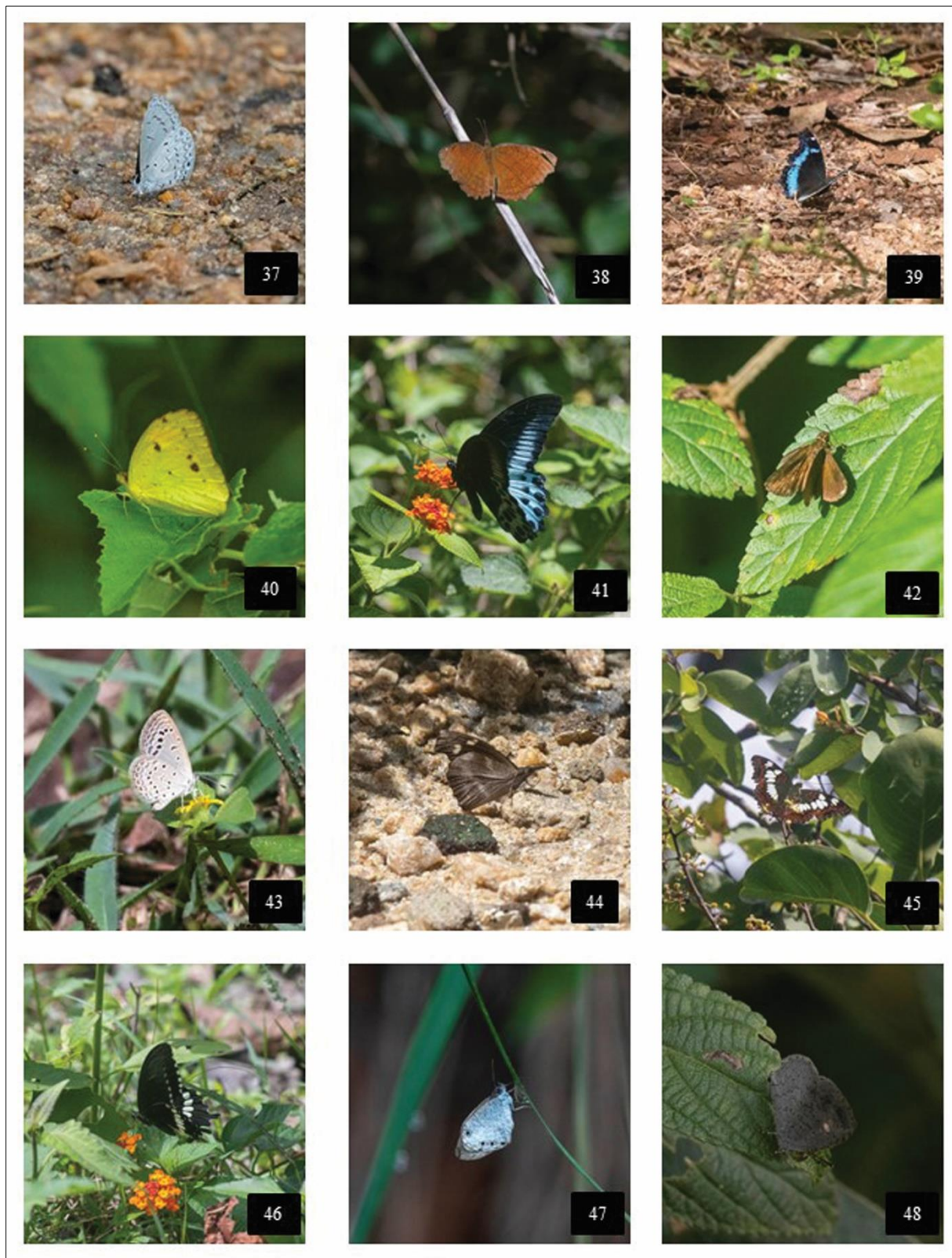
**Image 13-24.** 13–Angled Pierrot *Caleta decidia* | 14–Double-branded Crow *Euploea sylvester* | 15–Common Treebrown *Lethe rohria* | 16–Common Lascar *Pantoporia hordonia* | 17–Common Nawab *Charaxes bhārata* | 18–Common Sailer *Neptis hylas* | 19–Common Leopard *Phalanta phalantha* | 20–Common Emigrant *Catopsilia pomona* | 21–Common Banded Demon *Notocrypta paralysos* | 22–Orange awlet *Burara jaina* | 23–Black-vein Sergeant *Athyma ranga* | 24–Common Albatross *Appias albina* © Vinod Sadhasivan & Paulmathi Vinod





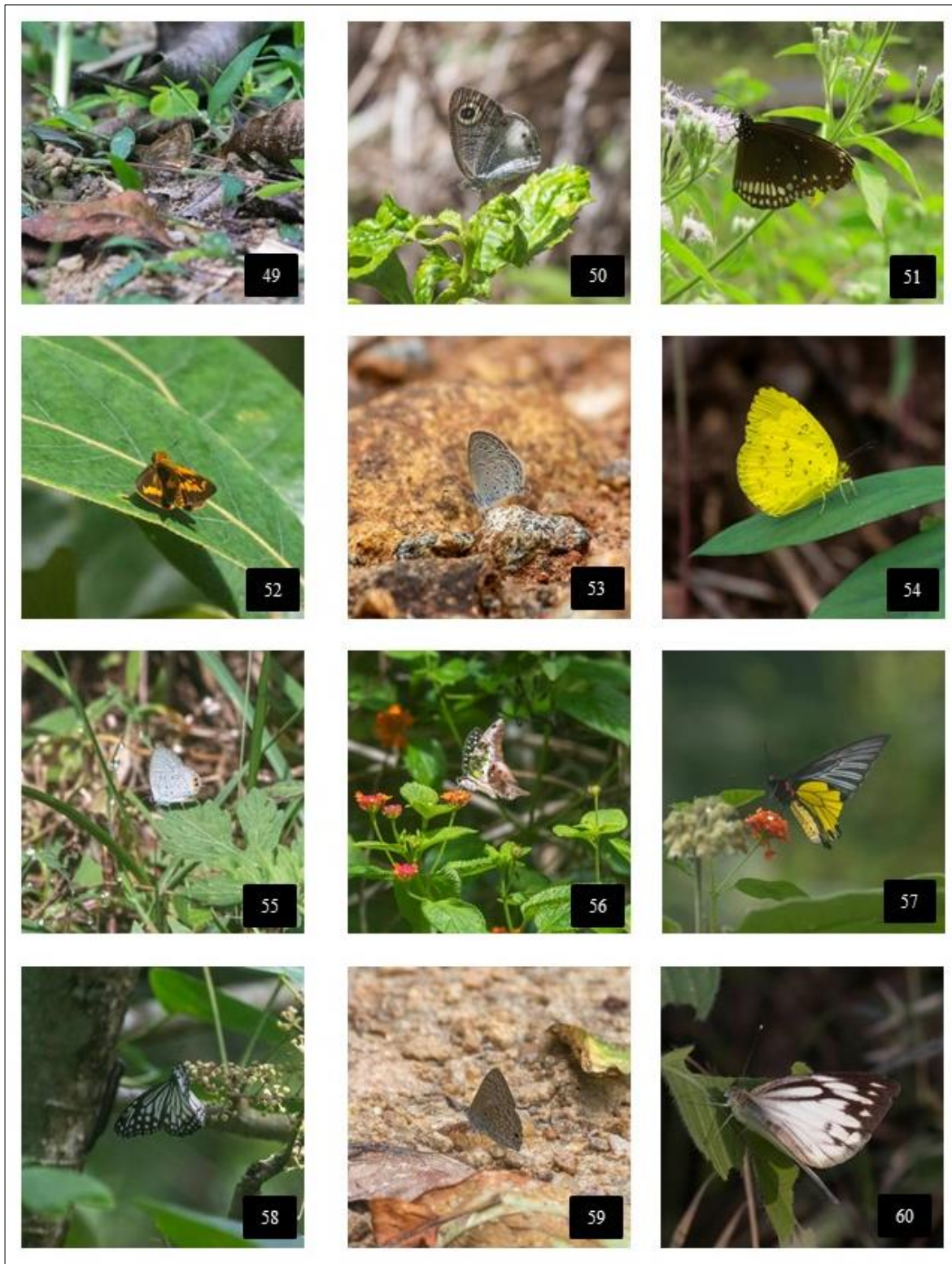
**Image 25-36.** 25–Plain Tiger *Danaus chrysippus* | 26–Great Eggfly *Hypolimnas bolina* | 27–White Banded Awl - *Hasora taminatus* | 28–Plains Cupid - *Chilades pandava* | 29–Large Oakblue *Arhopala amantes* | 30–Indian Tawny Rajah *Charaxes bernardus* | 31–Common Castor *Ariadne merione* | 32–Pale Grass Blue *Pseudozizeeria maha* | 33–Malayan Megisba *Megisba Malaya* | 34–Blue Tiger *Tirumala limniace* | 35–Plain Hedge Blue *Celastrina lavendularis* | 36–Common Cerulean *Jamides celeno* © Vinod Sadhasivan & Paulmathi Vinod





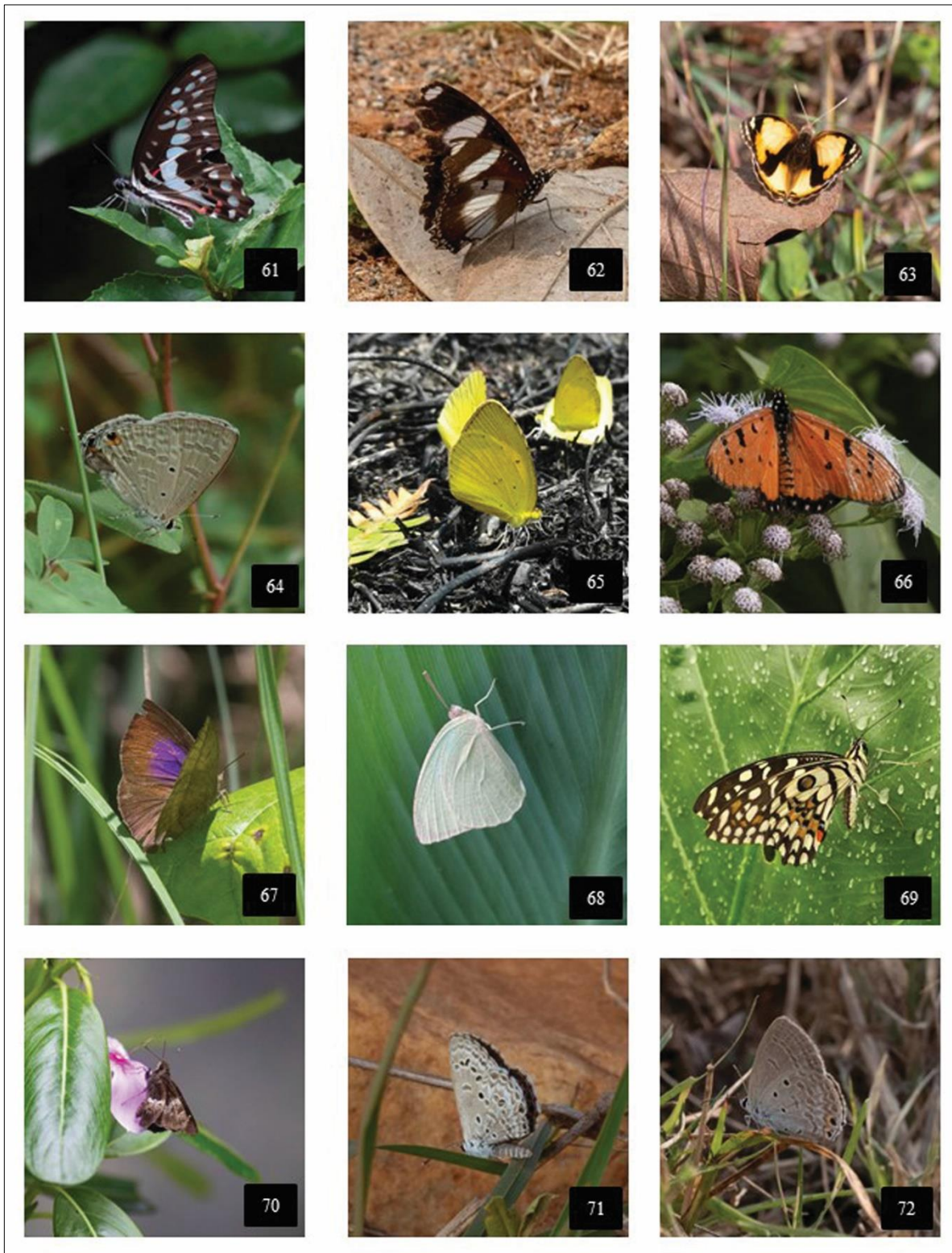
**Image 37-48.** 37–Common Hedge Blue *Acytrolepis puspa* | 38–Angled Castor *Ariadne ariadne* | 39–Blue Admiral *Kaniska canace* | 40–Yellow Orange-tip *Ixias pyrene* | 41–Blue Mormon *Papilio polymnestor* | 42–Chestnut Bob *Iambrix salsala* | 43–Dark Grass Blue *Zizeeria karsandra* | 44–Club Beak *Libythea myrrha* | 45–Commander *Moduza procris* | 46–Common Mormon *Papilio polytes* | 47–Common Four-ring *Ypthima huebneri* | 48–Apefly *Spalgis epius* © Vinod Sadhasivan & Paulmathi Vinod





**Image 49-60.** 49–Moore's Ace *Halpe porus* | 50–White Four-ring *Ypthima ceylonica* | 51– ommon Crow *Euploea core* | 52–Indian Dartlet *Oriens goloides* | 53–Tiny Grass Blue *Zizula hylax* | 54–Three-spot Grass Yellow *Eurema blanda* | 55–Indian Cupid *Everes lacturnus* | 56–Tailed Jay *Graphium agamemnon* | 57–Southern Birdwing *Troides minos* | 58–Glassy Tiger *Parantica aglea* | 59–Pointed Ciliate Blue *Anthene lycaenina* | 60–Common Gull *Cepora Nerissa* © **Vinod Sadhasivan & Paulmathi Vinod**



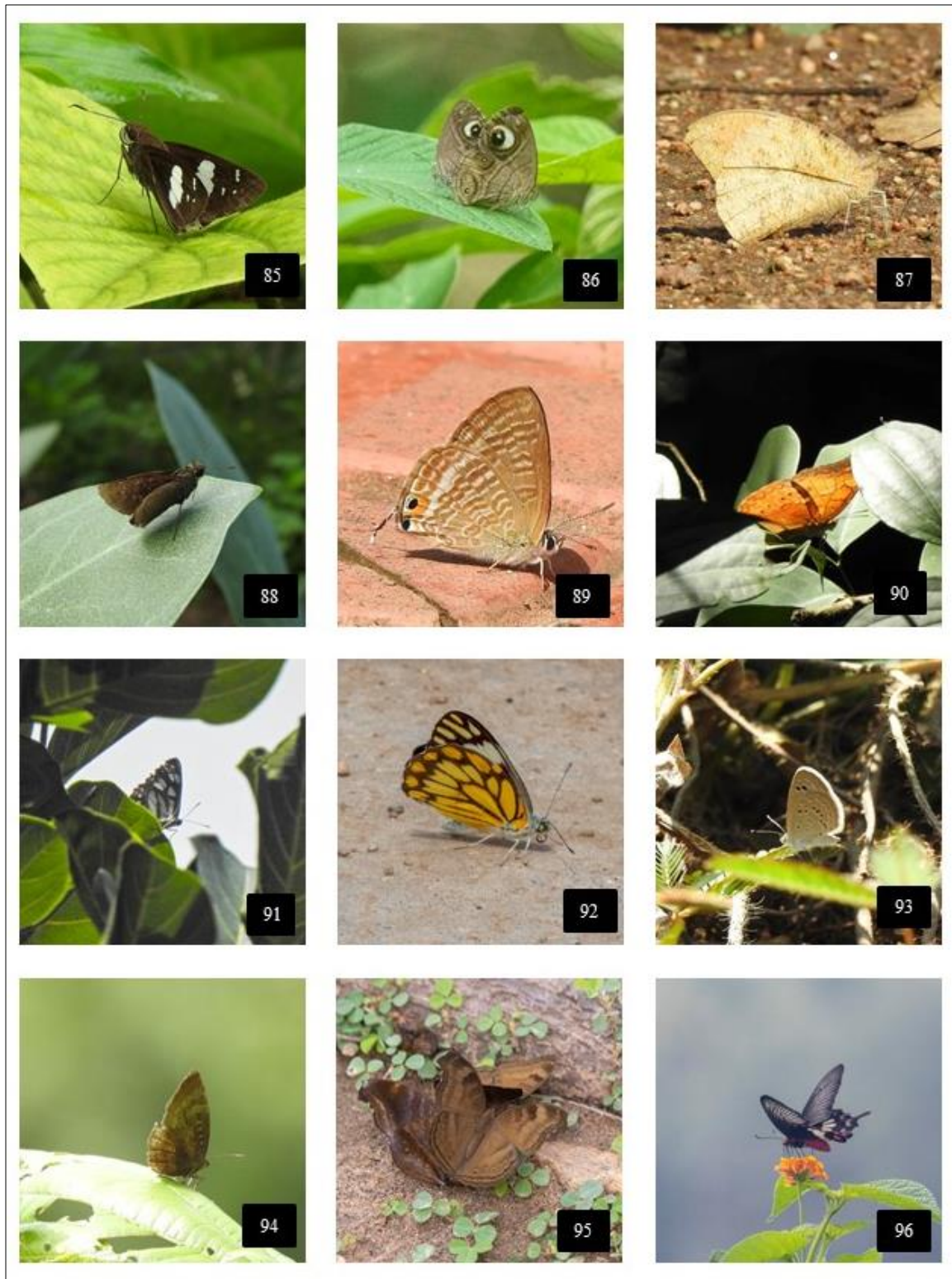


**Image 61-72.** 61. Common Jay *Graphium doson* | 62–Danaid Eggyfly *Hypolimnas misippus* | 63–Yellow Pansy *Junonia hierta* | 64–Forget-me-not *Catochrysops strabo* | 65–Small Grass Yellow *Eurema brigitta* | 66–Tawny Coster *Acraea terpsicore* | 67–Purple Leaf Blue *Amblypodia anita* | 68–Mottled Emigrant *Catopsilia pyranthe* | 69–Lime Butterfly *Papilio demoleus* | 70–Tree Flitter *Hyarotis adrastus* | 71–Lime Blue *Chilades lajus* | 72–Gram Blue *Euchrysops cnejus* © Vinod Sadhasivan & Paulmathi Vinod



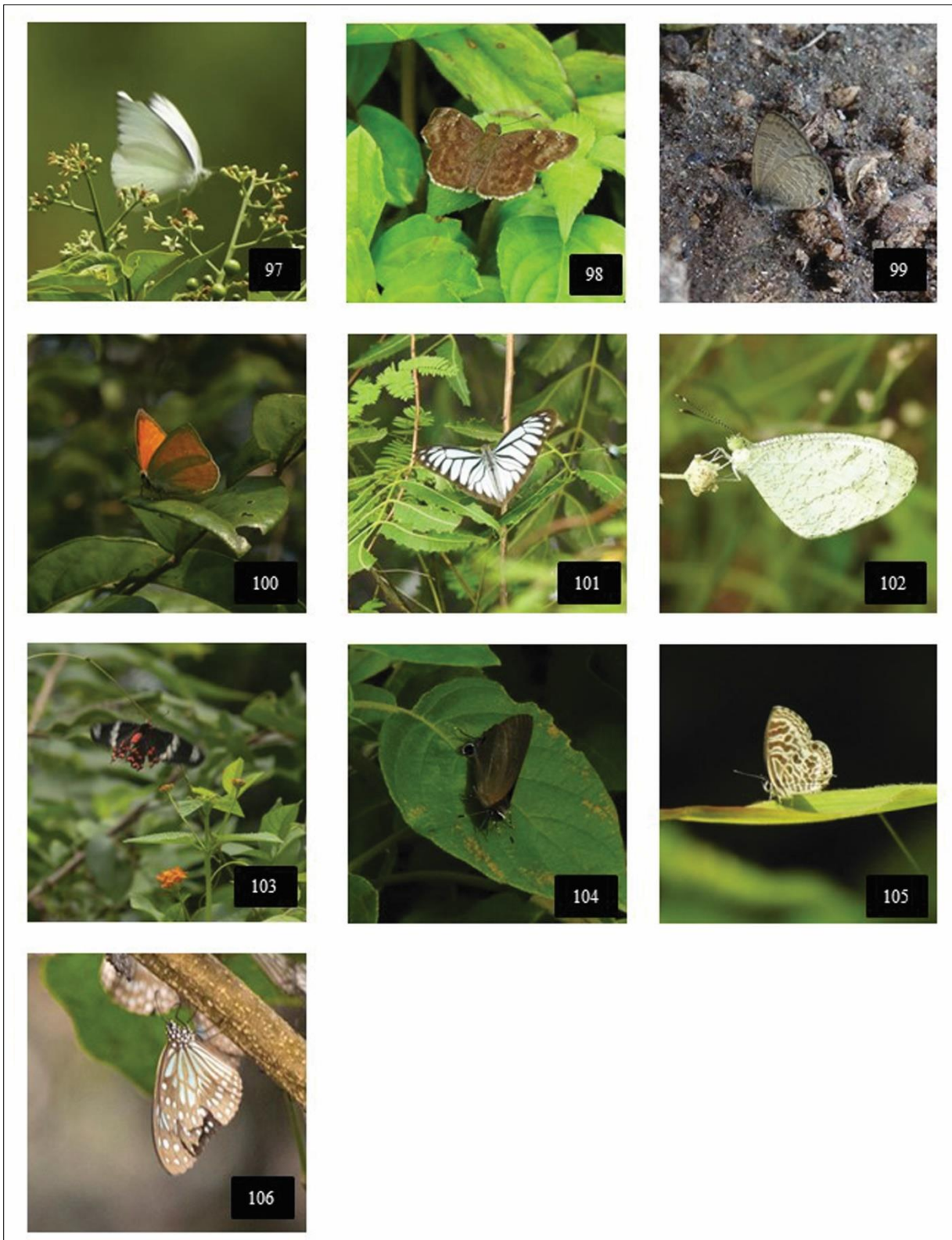


**Image 73-84.** 73–Common Tinsel *Catapaecilma major* | 74–Grey Pansy *Junonia atlites* | 75–Tamil Treebrown *Lethe drypetis* | 76–Southern Bluebottle *Graphium teredon* | 77–Rustic *Cupha erymanthis* | 78–Fulvous Pied Flat *Pseudocoladenia dan* | 79–Common Jezebel *Delias eucharis* | 80–Cornelian *Deudorix epijarbas* | 81–Common Evening Brown *Melanitis leda* | 82–Double-banded Judy *Abisara bifasciata* | 83–Lemon Pansy *Junonia lemonias* | 84–Chestnut-streaked Sailer *Neptis jumbah* © Vinod Sadhasivan & Paulmathi Vinod



**Image 85-96.** 85–Restricted Demon *Notocrypta curvifascia* | 86–Malabar Glad-eye Bushbrown *Mycalesis junonia* | 87–Great Orange-tip *Hebomoia glaucippe* | 88–Small Branded swift *Pelopidas mathias* | 89–Pea Blue *Lampides boeticus* | 90–Tamil Yeoman *Cirrochroa thais* | 91–Short-banded Sailer *Neptis columella* | 92–Pioneer *Belenois aurota* | 93–Lesser Grass Blue *Zizina otis* | 94–Centaur Oakblue *Arhopala centaurus* | 95–Chocolate Pansy *Junonia iphita* | 96– Common Rose *Pachliopta aristolochiae* © **Vinod Sadhasivan & Paulmathi Vinod**





**Image 97-106.** 97–Striped Albatross *Appias libythea* | 98–Common Small Flat *Sarangesa dasahara* | 99–Common Lineblue *Prosotas nora* | 100–Indian Sunbeam *Curetis thetis* | 101–Common Wanderer *Pareronia hippia* | 102–Psyche *Leptosia nina* | 103–Crimson Rose *Pachliopta hector* | 104–Indigo Flash *Rapala varuna* | 105–Zebra Blue *Leptotes plinius* | 106–Dark Blue Tiger *Tirumala septentrionis* © Vinod Sadhasivan & Paulmathi Vinod.

It's interesting to note that we sighted an Orange awlet, *Burara jaina fergusonii*. *Burara j. Astimata*, *B. j. Fergusonii* and *B. j. Jaina* are three subspecies found within Indian limits (Das et al. 2020). *Burara j. astigmata* confined to South Andaman, whereas, *B. j. fergusonii* occurs from North Maharashtra to South-Western India, while *B. j. Jaina* is known to be spanning from Himachal Pradesh to North-East India and outside the Indian boundary, it is found in Nepal, Bhutan, North-East Bangladesh, Myanmar, Northern Thailand, Northern Laos, North Vietnam, Yunnan and Hainan (Varshney and Smetacek 2015; Inayoshi 2019). The *B. j. fergusonii* was photographed by the first two authors at 17:17 hours (18.06.2022) and 16:32 hours (20.06.2022). The current observation is the first to be recorded in the Eastern Ghats, and we speculate that, *Burara jaina fergusonii*, an endemic species of the Western Ghats may also be found in other Eastern Ghats hills in Tamil Nadu. Similarly, Common Tinsel *Catapaecilma major callone* was also sighted. It is known to occur in Western Ghats from Maharashtra to Kerala (Varshney and Smetacek 2015; Anonymous 2022). Out of its known range, it has been reported at Yercaud hills, Eastern Ghats, Tamil Nadu (Staff reporter 2020), that lies roughly 180 Km (aerial distance) from current study area. Palani hill (Western Ghats) is the closest location where Evans (1910), Ghorpade and Kunte (2010) had reported this species. *Phaedyra columella nilgirica*, commonly called as Short-banded sailer was also sighted in KWP. This subspecies' known distribution extends from Gujarat to Kerala in the south, and West Bengal in East. Hitherto, it has not been reported in Eastern Ghats, hence it is first report in the Eastern Ghats of Tamil Nadu.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

As anticipated, the current study area has a high diversity of butterflies, accounting for roughly one-third of Tamil Nadu's butterfly diversity. In addition, because the study area is close to the Western Ghats, we found species that only occurs in those region. Owing to seasonal influence, it is impossible to produce a comprehensive list of butterflies in any given month of the year. Further, unseasonal summer rains during field work might have influenced the outcome of the present study. Therefore, at least two of such investigations must be conducted, each in a distinct season for a complete checklist. The riparian region around the river holds much promise for many more exciting finds in the future. The fact that such diversity exists in a small area within Eastern Ghats is an encouraging sign and also calls for immediate conservation efforts in the remaining Eastern Ghats hills of Tamil Nadu.

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#### Author's contribution

Conceptualization – VS, PV, and BMK; Field work – VS and PV; Preparing manuscript - all authors contributed equally to the final version of the manuscript.

#### Ethical approval

Butterflies (Insecta: Lepidoptera) from the Khandige estate in Sirumalai, Tamil Nadu, India were recorded in the study. The ethical guidelines are followed in the study for species observation & identification.

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#### Conflicts of interests

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interests.

#### Data and materials availability

All data associated with this study are present in the paper.

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